

Remarks/Arguments:

Claims 1-20 remain pending in the application.

Claims 1-2, 6, 9, 14, and 20 are hereby amended.

1. Claims 9-20 were rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph.

Claim 9 is amended to provide antecedent for “the broom head” in the preamble.

Claim 14 was rejected because of purported insufficient antecedent for “the bristles” in line 4; however, the claim has not been amended in these respects because the antecedent appears in original claim, line 3, as the listed element of “bristles connected to the handle”. Claims 20 is amended to provide antecedent for “the bristles” in the preamble.

2. Claims 1, 6-7, 9-10, 14 and 20 were rejected under 35 USC 102(a) as anticipated by Nagoya.

Nagoya (a form of limited English translation is attached hereto) discloses a broom stand that, in use as a stand, has semiconical form at its extent that rests on the floor and has semicylindrical form that grips the broom handle for supporting the broom with the stand. The Nagoya broom stand is flexible material, and therefore is not configured or intended to prevent the bristles of the broom from contacting the floor and aiding in support of the broom together with the stand – rather the broom bristles must rest on the floor and aid/provide support for the broom in cooperation with the stand.

Applicant’s amended independent claims 1, 6, and 9, and also original independent claim 3, each provide for a stand/guard that is connected to a head of a broom, not connected to the handle. Additionally, amended independent claims 6 and 9, and original independent claim 3, each state that the stand/guard serves to suspend the

bristles, rather than employ the bristles to aid the stand in supporting the broom. Nagoya discloses solely the handle-connected support that is aided by the bristles to the support the broom.

Applicant's amended independent claims 14 and 20 each provide that the stand/guard/shield substantially surrounds the bristles as shielding for the bristles. Nagoya merely discloses the semiconical stand that exposes the broom bristles.

3. Claims 1-17 and 19-20 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by Turner. Turner discloses a broom stand that also connects to the broom via the handle of the broom. The Turner stand includes four support prongs that are extendable beyond the bristles to stand the broom.

As described above with respect to Nagoya, Applicant's independent claims 1, 3, 6, and 9, each provide for a stand/guard that is connected to a head of a broom. Also, Applicant's independent claims 14 and 20 each provide that the stand/guard/shield substantially surrounds the bristles as shielding for the bristles.

Turner does not disclose these features of Applicant's claims (amended and original, as applicable).

4. Claims 1-17 and 19-20 were rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as anticipated by Manthey. Manthey, like Nagoya and Turner, affixes a stand with the handle and the stand does not serve as a stand/guard/shield because the bristles are exposed.

As previously described, Applicant's independent claims (amended and original, as applicable) are patentably distinguished from Manthey in these respects.

5. Claims 1-20 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by Bohne. Bohne discloses a "plumber's brush" for applying paste and cement. Bohne does not disclose

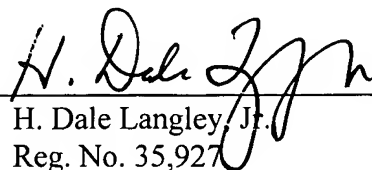
any employment of the sleeve for use as a stand or support. Rather, Bohne's disclosure is expressly limited to the concept of "plumber's brush" and also that the sleeve thereof is merely to cover the bristles when the brush is not being used. Of course, this could understandably be helpful if the brush is employed for applying paste and cement that could dry and harden if bristles are left exposed and not cleaned thoroughly. But, the Bohne plumber's brush and the bristle sleeve thereof is merely that. Bohne does not and can not anticipate Applicant's claims.

Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections and rejections, and prompt allowance of all claims.

If the Examiner has any questions or comments, the undersigned attorney for Applicant respectfully requests a call to discuss any issues. The Office is authorized to charge any excess fees or to credit any overage to the undersigned's Deposit Account No. 50-1350.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: April 20, 2006

By: 
H. Dale Langley, Jr.
Reg. No. 35,927

The Law Firm of H. Dale Langley, Jr.
610 West Lynn
Austin, Texas 78703
Telephone: (512) 477-3830
Facsimile: (512) 480-0858
E-Mail: dlangley@iptechlaw.com